



Transportation Advisory Committee

Date: July 13, 2022

Time: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM.

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation (Zoom).

Minutes.

1. Administration.

Members in Attendance: Dan Amstutz (DPCD), John Aslanian, Bill Copithorne (DPW), Lenard Diggins, Melissa Laube, Jeff Maxtutis, Tycho Nightingale, Corey Rateau (APD), James Stubbe, Laura Swan (Chair), and Shoji Takahashi.

Members Absent: Beth Benedikt, Ray Jones, and Scott Smith.

Members of Public in Attendance: Rebecca Charlier, Gustavo Pardo, Paul Schlichtman, and Joe Solomon.

The Chair provided notice regarding Remotely Conducted Meetings, referring the members to the agenda attachment entitled “Governor Charles Baker’s 3/12/2020 Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law”. The Chair reviewed the meeting ground rules and announced that the meeting was being recorded.

B. Approval of Meeting Notes.

The Minutes of the May 11, 2022 meeting were approved.

The Minutes of the June 8, 2022 meeting were approved, subject to a correction in Section 3.C.4 “Update: MBTA Bus Stops”: The Select Board Meeting was held on June 27 (not June 22).

C. Town Day table on September 17.

TAC and ABAC will have a joint table at Town Day, sharing the \$70 table fee. John Aslanian, Melissa Laube, Jeff Maxtutis, and Laura Swan volunteered to staff the table.

TAC materials from previous Town Days are stored by DPCD in the Town Annex Building. TAC will need to discuss what materials to bring to Town Day. Dan Amstutz noted that some materials are in poor condition.

D. Correspondence sent/received between June 4 and July 8, 2022.

1. June 16, 2022 memo from the office of the Select Board to TAC Chair, "Crosswalk on Summer Street at Victoria Road".

Discussion later in the meeting (Agenda Item 13).

2. June 28, 2022 memo from the office of the Select Board to TAC Chair, "Comments: Re: Parking Study Analysis".

Len Diggins explained that the Select Board is seeking additional information on the methodology and conclusions of the Parking Study Analysis of Parking on Massachusetts Avenue near the intersection of Appleton St based on comments from East Arlington Livable Streets Coalition (EALS). Jeff Maxtutis and Melissa Laube have expertise on parking, and they will discuss it offline with Len Diggins.

3. June 10, 2022 memo from the Arlington School Committee to the Office of the Select Board, "Letter to the Select Board" regarding unsafe driver behavior near schools.

Traffic Supervisors have commented on unsafe and aggressive behavior of drivers, and APD is in discussion with them.

The School Committee is requesting that certain sections of roadways near schools be designated School Zones: River St (Thompson), Broadway (Thompson and Gibbs), Mass Ave (Thompson, Gibbs, and AHS). However, these sections do not meet current MassDOT warrants to be designated as School Zones.

2. Public Comments (for information only, not for action).

Paul Schlichtman expanded on the School Committee letter to the Select Board, expressing concern about student safety. He noted that Massachusetts is more restrictive on School Zone designation than other states, such as New York. He noted that the MassDOT District 4 Administrator informed him that there likely will be changes to the guidelines in the near future including monetary support to towns to assist in designating school zones. Corey Rateau recommended waiting for an official position from MassDOT.

Separately, Paul Schlichtman requested an update on Chestnut St.

3. Town Issues/Activities (not already on the agenda).

A. Bill Copithorne provided an update from the Department of Public Works (DPW).

Construction season is in full swing. Sidewalk repair and paving near Peirce School and Stratton School are underway. Sidewalk repairs on Valentine Rd near Dallin School are also ongoing.

Paving of Medford St and River St is now complete with temporary markings. Permanent pavement markings are on hold and awaiting guidance (specifically bike infrastructure markings). The bike network design matrix is being updated.

ADA curb ramp projects in East Arlington and on Russell St and Water St are ongoing.

Speed feedback sign on Lowell St near the Reservoir is not functioning properly. The contractor is performing diagnostics to fix the problem.

B. Dan Amstutz provided an update from the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD).

1. Mystic River Path to Minuteman Bikeway Feasibility Study and Minuteman Bikeway Planning Project have been completed. Final reports will be posted to the Town website.

2. Mass Ave and Appleton St Corridor Project. Follow up survey/concept board is open for public comments through this month.

3. Chestnut St and intersection of Mystic St and Chestnut St. Stantec is collecting traffic data and conducting a land survey. Results from the land survey will require design concept changes in order to fit within the geometry of the roadway. Public outreach on the intersection of Mystic St and Chestnut St is being planned for the fall.

MassDOT awarded the Town approximately \$140,000 under its Shared Streets and Spaces Program for construction of the Chestnut St Safety Project.

4. Park Ave MBTA Bus Stop changes have been approved by the Select Board.

C. Corey Rateau provided an update from the Police Department (APD).

APD is addressing parking complaints and is conducting safety planning.

The Community Traffic Safety grant is underway with 22 spots left to raffle. The first group of participants enjoyed the workshop through InControl Driving School.

4. Vote: Bates Rd left turn

Bill Copithorne drafted a Memo to the Select Board on the Bates Rd left turn analysis. Len Diggins and John Aslanian noted that the reference to "Foster St" should be "Tufts St". Jeff Maxtutis and Dan Amstutz praised the Memo as well written. The motion to send the Memo to the Select Board was approved unanimously.

5. Vote: Everett St and Mass Ave

Bill Copithorne drafted a Memo to the Select Board on Everett St and Mass Ave. He noted that "No Parking Here to Corner" signs were installed by DPW (which do not require Select Board approval) to prevent illegal parking near the intersection. The motion to send the Memo to the Select Board was approved unanimously.

6. Update: Newland Rd/Summer St Crosswalk.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Arrival and Dismissal Audit for Peirce Elementary School has been completed. The findings will be incorporated in the TAC Working Group assessment.

7. Discussion: Overlook Rd Traffic Calming

Per the June Meeting, Shoji Takahashi requested APD speed enforcement in the area. He will draft a Memo to the Select Board.

8. Update: Mt Gilboa Traffic Calming

Rebecca Charlier informed the TAC of automobile speeding on Westminster Ave and driver non-compliance of the 4-way stop sign at the intersection of Westminster Ave and Westmoreland Ave. Gustavo Pardo concurred, adding that drivers on Westminster Ave do not follow the stop sign, and he observes close calls every week.

Jeff Maxtutis inquired about improving the sightline by tree trimming and also painting stop bars at the location. Ray Jones will be conducting stop-compliance observations.

Rebecca Charlier noted that the speed feedback sign on Lowell St near the Reservoir was working this morning, and it does seem to slow traffic coming from Lexington. She asked about road markings for Lowell St. Bill Copithorne responded that permanent lane markings are on hold, and temporary markings might be installed. Striping of stop bars can be done when Lowell St is striped.

Laura Swan noted that heavier traffic through the neighborhood might be due to Lowell St traffic being diverted in Lexington due to MWRA construction to replace water lines. APD has requested that MWRA not divert traffic onto Lowell St.

9. Update: Thompson Area Traffic Calming

Crosswalks at Broadway and N Union St. and Broadway and Rawson Rd/Foster St (near Gibbs School): parking enforcement near the crosswalks according to regulation to improve sightlines and visibility of students. Corey Rateau added that he had previously set signs on parking for daylighting crosswalk. He will send a parking attendant to the area to enforce parking.

10. Vote: Dallin SRTS

Laura Swan drafted a memo from TAC to the Select Board in support of the Dallin School's continuation of the pilot arrival/dismissal program based on recommendations from the MA Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. Dallin School is seeking Select Board approval to continue the changes under the pilot for the coming school year 2022 – 2023 including closing Florence Ave along the one-block stretch in front of the school main entrance during arrival and dismissal periods.

As part of the pilot, TAC measured the impact on surrounding streets by traffic counts. There was an increase in number of vehicles on Oakland Ave during arrival time 7:45am – 8:45am with an 85th-percentile speed between 24 – 27 mph. Jeff Maxtutis added that the range of volume and speed were as expected.

Melissa Laube inquired as to how the neighborhood viewed the changes under the pilot program. Laura Swan responded that Dallin School sent out a survey to neighbors and the school community. Joe Solomon added that surveys were sent out to the neighborhood including QR codes posted on utility poles to an online survey. Survey results were positive, and a presentation is being prepared for the Select Board. Notably, 88% of respondents said it reduced driving to school; and 67% were more likely to walk or bike to school.

The motion to send the Memo to the Select Board in support of extending the pilot for the next school year (2022 – 2023) was approved unanimously.

11. Discussion: Wachusett Ave and Appleton St

Wayne Chouinard, Jeff Maxtutis, and Jim Stubbe volunteered to form a Working Group to examine the intersection of Wachusett Ave and Appleton St.

12. Discussion: Arlington High School

Melissa Laube, Jeff Maxtutis, Scott Smith, and Shoji Takahashi volunteered to form a Working group to assess (1) installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of Mill St and Mill Brook Dr and (2) traffic patterns in front of AHS on Mass Ave.

13. Discussion: Victoria Rd and Summer St

Dan Amstutz provided background on the crosswalk across Summer St at Victoria Rd. This is the only marked crosswalk of Summer St between traffic signals at Mill St and at Mystic St (a distance of nearly 1,400'). Buzzell Field and Arlington Catholic Practice Field host many sporting events and activities.

Pedestrians face difficult sightlines crossing from the fields into the neighborhood. Automobile parking on Summer St makes it challenging to see moving traffic, and illegal parking at and near the crosswalk make it worse. In response to a question from Len Diggins, Corey Rateau responded that parking problems usually arise only during games. It can be hard to enforce parking unless the schedules are known in advance.

The Town can consider a short-term installation such as flex posts to enforce no parking near the crosswalk.

In the longer-term, the Mystic River Path to Minuteman Bikeway Feasibility Study looked at shortening the crossing and moving the crosswalk from the east side to the west side of Victoria Rd. The Town can consider adding this intersection to the Complete Streets priority list or Shared Streets Program. Its proximity to Bishop School, Arlington Catholic, and park and playing field will make this location more competitive in its bid for funding.

Dan Amstutz, Jim Stubbe, and Shoji Takahashi volunteered to form a Working Group to examine the intersection of Victoria Rd and Summer St.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.